

Brockton Family Receives Christmas Gift of First-Time Home Ownership thanks to Community Partnership and YMCA YouthBuild Team

(Note: Youth from the Brockton RISE Youth Opportunity Program, one of the 36 Youth Opportunity Grant programs funded by the US Department of Labor, worked on the YouthBuild team that built the house for the Ford family.)

BROCKTON --- A single mother who climbed her way from unemployment to self-sufficiency will literally be "home for Christmas" this year thanks to a partnership of city leaders, businesses, non-profits and a team of young adults who spent the last year building a three-bedroom ranch on what was once a blighted city lot.

Jennifer Ford, of Brockton and her two daughters, Jalisa, 11, and Jaqueline, 5, will receive the keys to their new home during a ceremony at 186 Florence Street, Brockton, on Friday, December 21 at 10:30 a.m. The family is packed and ready to move in this weekend, just in time to celebrate Christmas together.

The home was a project of the Old Colony YMCA's YouthBuild Brockton program, a year-long construction skills training program for young men and women (ages 16-24), who have not completed high school. Young people learn carpentry by building homes for low-income families, while working to earn their G.E.D. and receiving life skills training.

"It's a winning situation all around," said YouthBuild Director John Bengel. "A family gains the stability and pride of home ownership, the city receives a positive investment in its neighborhoods, and a team of young adults gains marketable construction skills and more direction for their lives."

The Florence Street property was donated to the Brockton Housing Authority by the City of Brockton. Construction financing was arranged through Brockton Credit Union.

YouthBuild training funds were provided through the U.S. Department of Labor's Youth Opportunities Grant, which is managed by the Brockton Area Private Industry Council,

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